

ADVANCED IRON



Stephens 1984



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This issue's cover, by Jason Stephens, is a St. Patrick's Day tribute. Actually I think IM looks pretty good in green. What do you think? If you subscribe to Iron Fan, you should have issue #4 in your hands now (since it was sent with this issue of AI.) This issue is a little large and includes the color cover to make up for it's lateness. If you want your future issues in color (and mailed flat) please add \$1 per issue.

Iron Man's universe is **E X P A N D I N G !** The latest issue of Sales To Astonish, Marvel's advanced comics info magazine, has taken to listing comics by families (e.g. X-Men titles, Midnight Sons titles etc.). Iron Man's got his own family (called Force Works)! It consists of:

- Force Works first week of the Month
- War Machine second week of the Month
- Iron Man fourth week of the Month

In May, there will be an IM title out EVERY WEEK (see Things to Come). The third week will be filled by What If? and the fourth week will be the Iron Man Annual (with IM himself showing up in the fifth week). If you'd like to have an Iron Man title show up Every Week on Every Month, let Nel Yomtov know. You can write to him c/o Marvel Comics at 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. Some suggestions for a regular third week slot have included *Iron Man 2020* or an already established title such as Guardians of the Galaxy (because of the appearances of The Stark).

SIGHTINGS

Where your heroes are showing up in the pages of other books and specials:

GUARDIAN'S OF THE GALAXY #48

Overkill, formerly known as Taserface of The Stark, battles with Hollywood, formerly known as Wonder Man. Overkill's armor is derived from the technology of Tony Stark and this version looks like it has a few War Machine touches (e.g. shoulder cannon).

THE INCREDIBLE HULK #417

Both IRON MAN and WAR MACHINE show up for Rick's bachelor party (and no...I'm not going to give away the secret terror of the *ECDYSIAST!*). By the way, how DOES Iron Man drink through a straw without a mouth hole?

MARVEL COMICS #153 & #154

WAR MACHINE story. This story leads into issue #1 of the War Machine series.

NIGHT THRASHER #10

IRON MAN (representing SE) and Night Thrasher (representing Genetech) battle it out in a misunderstanding brought on by events in the Crash and Burn storyline.

KAMINSKI'S KORNER

Len Kaminski has graciously agreed to answer your questions about his Iron Man universe. I've started things off with a few of my own questions:

IF: Regarding the Iron Man animated series, how close is this to a sure thing?

Len: As far as I'm aware, the IRON MAN cartoon is a done deal, for release this fall. A weekly series, I'm not sure how many episodes are planned.

IF: Will it be produced by the same group that currently does X-Men?

(I assume you know that War Machine was in an episode of X-Men)

Len: The company that's producing it is Marvel Films; whether that's the same guys that do X-MEN, I dunno, since I've paid little or not attention to X-MEN (though I did hear about War Machine's cameo in that, haven't seen it so far; can you tell me which episode it was?)

IF: It was SEASON 2 in the episode TIME FUGITIVES (Part -1) about 2/3 of the way through the episode.

IF: Which character bios did you give them, and are they at liberty to rearrange the history of these characters?

Len: I (along with WAR MACHINE co-writer Scott Benson) did a basic character bible for the show, covering all the characters they plan to use (they gave us a list, and we wrote bios for those characters). They've taken liberties with some of the characters involved, and simplified the relationships between others (like Stark and Rhodes), but overall, it's looking like they'll be reasonably faithful to existing continuity. In the case of certain villains, Scott and I took the opportunity to revise them slightly, improving them over the comics versions (I liked what Scott came up with for Blizzard so much I'm going to revamp the comics version to match it). *(Len said he will try to get us a copy of the bible!)*

IF: Will they use computer animation? If you've seen Babylon 5, you know what they're capable of these days.

Len: I haven't heard anything about them using computer animation, so I assume it'll be standard cel work. Yep, seen BABYLON 5, and I agree the effects are pure dynamite (coincidentally enough, I spoke to Ron Thornton -- effects master for B5 -- several years ago before he hit the big time, about doing some C-gen work on an IM graphics novel I was working on at the time, though it didn't work out in the end). On the brighter side, a lot of the character designs were done by the same team that did BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES, and the look GREAT. I've also seen designs for the toy line that's supposed to accompany the cartoon (that's right, a TOY LINE), and those look equally swell. They're going to have a half-dozen different Iron Men in various suits (stealth, deep-sea, space armor, etc.) as well as a War Machine (!!!) figure -- with spring-loaded missiles!

IF: Would you like to write any of the episodes for the series? (is it a series?)

Len: . . . I have to admit I'm curious, but it probably won't be happening, for several reasons. First is that I'm just too busy with the comics work I've got on my plate, and TV work is such a snake-pit business-wise I'm hesitant to take on the aggravation. Plus the fact that the TV guys are taking their sweet time about PAYING Scott and I for the character bible (six months and counting, now).

Next Month: A startling new direction for Iron Man!

Stark Remarks

by Mike Kalibabky

Illustrations by Russ Fletcher and Robert Sumner

"If Tony Stark thinks you're the right man for the job... that's good enough for me."— Susan Richards, after hiring Scott Lang to hack into a data module taken from Dr. Doom's lab. (*Fantastic Four* #384)

Fletch and Robert to the Rescue

From now on, my good friends and artists, Russ Fletcher and Robert Sumner, both from the great state of Oregon will be supplying me with brand new Iron Man art for my columns. Fletchman has illustrated mucho fanzines, while Robert is THE KING of the small press, independent comic publishers in his neck of the woods. I'm honored to have these two talents taking time out to help me.

Where Credits are Due

How come Marvel doesn't print the names of a comic's creative team on the comic's cover?

Other Armor

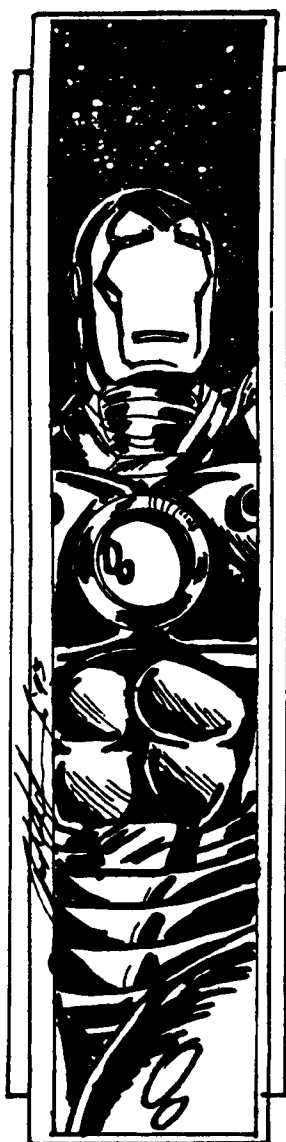
It finally dawned on me: Green Lantern and Iron Man are a lot alike, especially now that GL has armor. What I mean is, both heroes, in a sense, cybernetically control their resources.

The Mandroids appear in

Thunderstrike #'s 5 & 6 (although they only appear in four panels in Issue #5).

Scott Lang, the Astonishing Ant Man, appears in *Fantastic Four Three*, courtesy of Tony Stark (see quote above by Susan Richards). Mr. Lang will remain on staff as their maintenance technician. Hmmm, I wonder if Tony is paying Scott's salary, seeing as how the FF are currently facing financial difficulties. I'm surprised Tony just doesn't write them a check!

John Henry Irons has fled the pages of *Superman: Man of Steel* to appear in his own book, *Steel*. And, yes, Mr. Irons will be trying to recover his "stolen" technology a la the Armor Wars; however, a lot of the tech has fallen into the hands of street gangs in his own neighborhood! I enjoyed *Steel* #1. It will be interesting to see how



sales of this book stack up against *Hardware* and *WAR Machine*, two other comics featuring armored black heroes.

There is a great full-page illustration of Overkill, one of the more violent members of the alien race known as The Stark, on the final page OF *Guardians of the Galaxy* #47.

Toys, but Not for Us

How come Batman toy figurines come in so many cool costume/armor variations, but Iron Man has only one (and that's if you can find it): "Pot-Bellied Stove Man"? Yuck.

WAR Machine: A Suit of a Different Color?

In a Len Kaminski interview that I read someplace, probably in *Marvel Age*, I learned that the WAR Machine armor was supposed to have been blue and gold. Funny: isn't that the color scheme for the X-O Manowar and new Batman armors? (Forgive me, but I like the new Bat helmet, with the built-in laser sight on the left temple, slightly above the left eye.)

Dave Michelinie!

Now that Bill has made connections with former *Iron Man* writer Dave Michelinie, maybe Mr. M. can give us

some insights into just what direction he and Bob Layton were taking Iron Man prior to their departure from the book.

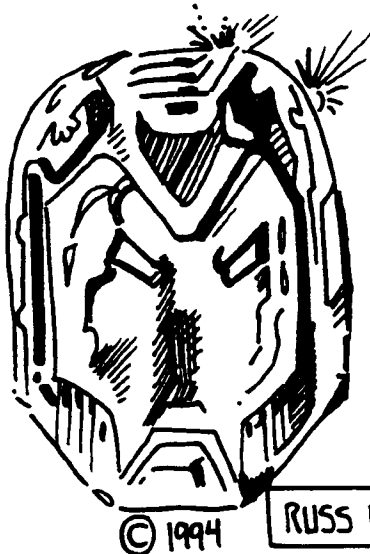
Sometime after Dave left *Iron Man* (he out-and-out quit after an editing

dispute over ethics), I read in *Advance Comics* that Bob Layton was going to have the bio chip in Tony Stark's back begin to grow! Was this the beginning of a bio-armor that Layton was later to develop in the pages of *X-O*

Manowar... not unlike the popular

Japanese comic book and animation hero, The Guyver?

Not to get totally off the subject, but I personally think that **X-O Manowar is a rip-off of The Guyver**. For those readers unaware of what I'm talking about, **The Guyver**, Japanese for "out of control" is an alien suit of "bio-boosting" armor that enhances the physical powers and capabilities of its wearer. Sound familiar? Just wait. There are **bad guys**—The Zoanoids, humans who have been altered and now have the power to mutate into ugly, nightmarish monsters at will—who are trying desperately to recover the Guyver unit from its present user. Sound even more familiar? The Zoanoids are employees of an evil corporation, Kronos Japan. Need I go on? Anyway, you get the idea.



By the way, the Guyver armor is lightyears ahead in coolness over the X-O unit that was recently destroyed.

I highly recommend The Guyver animated videos. And as far as comic adaptations, Viz comics has just come out with a twelve issue *Bio-Booster Armor Guyver* limited series. Russ Fletcher just located issue #5 for me!

And now let's get off the subject just for a moment. Here's what Bob Layton wrote in the introduction to the X-O Manowar TPB, *Retribution*:

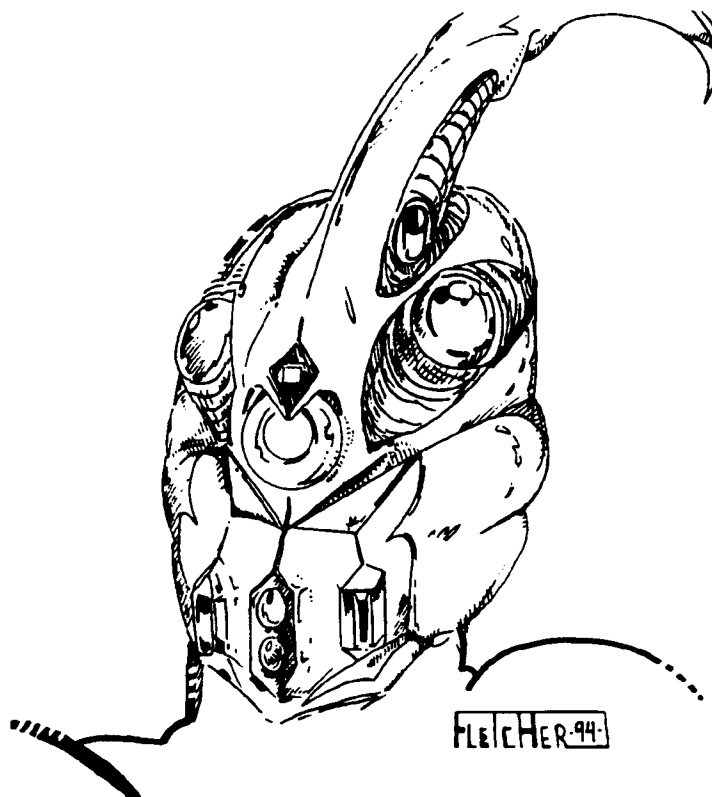
"Ever since I was a kid, I've loved stories of noble warriors in shining armor. I grew up on the legends of King Arthur, The Atomic Knights™, Iron Man™, and football (yes, I know football uniforms aren't shiny). I suppose that's what led me to gravitate to Marvel Comics in '78 to do a certain "Armored Avenger" with my long-time friend and partner, Dave Michelinie. I used to make up my own Iron Man stories when I was younger and, eventually, I was able to actually plot the course of one of my childhood heroes.

"But—there were problems.

He came with so much *history*; some of which wasn't a lot of fun to deal with. Over the years, other writers created a mythology that I felt restrictive. You could only go so far with the character until you hit *that* wall. That, combined with changes in editorial policy, led me to abandon my childhood hero and seek my fortune elsewhere."

So, okay.

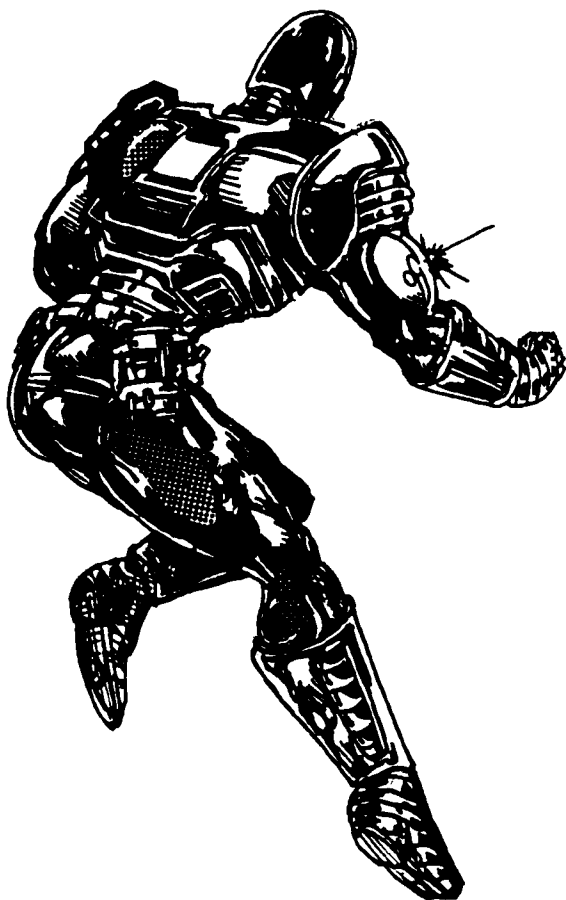
But no kidding: Before Len Kaminski came along, Michelinie by far was my all-time favorite *Iron Man* scribe. I think it's great of Dave to help us out with *Iron Fan* and *Advanced Iron*. It shows that he's **still** a fan of the character. Maybe we can get Mr. Layton to contribute sometime, too. (I just wrote him a letter.)



Misc.

The *RoboCop Roulette* limited Series from Dark Horse is a good read.

Former *Iron Man* Penciler Mark Bright did the breakdowns on *Hardware* #14. *Hardware* will be donning new armor as of issue #17. The cover of that issue will be drawn



by John Byrne.

In *Marvel Age* #61 there is a picture of an alternate cover to Mike Saenz's Iron Man graphic novel *Crash*. I wonder if the alternate cover was ever used or what the deal was...

Len has written an Atom story for DC's *Showcase '94* #6. The Atom tries to defuse a bomb by working his way through its computer system. This sounds like the plot of *Iron Man* # 203, where a miniaturized Iron Man tries to recover his personal fortune in such the same manner—except IM attacks banking/financial software! Kinda like an accountant taking on an income tax program.

The origin of Dr. Erica Sondheim is revealed in a Michelinie/Byrne/Layton Ant-Man story that appeared in *Marvel Premiere* #'s 47-48 way back in 1979. I found the issues while digging through some old stuff at one of the comic shops I frequent. I paid a buck each for them.

And speaking of cheap, wholesome entertainment, I found some wonderful Stan Lee/Gene Colan *Tales of Suspense* reprints in *Marvel Super-Heroes* #'s 30 and 31. Those two books set me back \$4.00.

Parting Shot

Why, why, why, doesn't Marvel do an overlay, cutaway layout of the new Iron Man armor like Valiant did for the X-O Manowar armor in the *X-O Database* that came with the previously mentioned X-O trade paperback, *Retribution*? Let's get with it! Sure, the *Iron Manual* was well done and there was an excellent explanation of the Iron Man TPU in *Iron Man* #290, but we would appreciate "more meat." **We want something special.** And I don't mean refrigerator magnets or some dumb-assed thing like that. Iron Man just celebrated his 30th Anniversary... and nothing happened.

March 15, 1994
Chisholm, Minnesota

Illustrations

(in order of appearance):

- "Soulful Iron Man" by Robert Sumner
- "A New Shell-Head" by Russ Fletcher
- "The Guyver" by Russ Fletcher
- "WAR Machine Descending" by R. Sumner

THINGS TO COME

A lot of my preview information comes from a book called Sales to Astonish which is provided to your local dealer by Marvel.

FORCE WORKS #1 (ships 3 May)

by Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning/ Tom Tenney/ Rey Garcia

Yes, it's really coming this time (cross-your-fingers). This 48 page, "pop-up cover" issue is the debut of Tony's new team of heroes with a new style! The new style is that they attempt to prevent disasters and malicious acts from happening rather than confronting them once they appear. The source of their advanced information is a machine built by Stark and powered by the Scarlet Witch. I hope it works well, because I'd hate to be on the other side of a misunderstanding

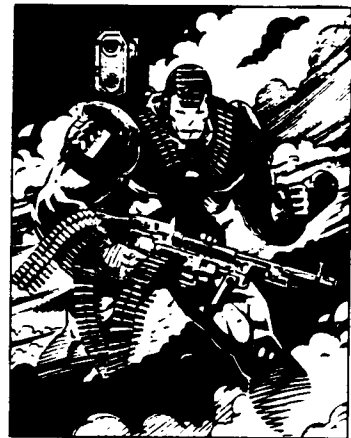
with IRON MAN, SCARLET WITCH, SPIDER-WOMAN, US AGENT, and WONDER MAN. And just who is the new hero on the block, CENTURY? Find out in Force Works #1. Oh, and there's also a battle with the Kree.



WAR MACHINE #4 (ships 10 May)

by Len Kaminski & Scott Benson/ Gabe Gecko/ Pam Ecklund

In the wrap up to his first story arc, WM recovers the kidnapped Cetewayo, but events conspire to pit him against the Advisor, a villain "unlike any other he's ever faced!" ----->



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WHAT IF? #63 (ships 17 May)

by Dan Slott and Manny Galan

Remember the old choose-your-own-path storybooks? Well you get to be War Machine in this one! This issue is based on the Iron Man story in which War Machine destroyed the Living Laser, but you decide how it ends.

IRON MAN ANNUAL #15 (ships 24 May)

by Len Kaminski / Gene Colan/ Al Williamson

No longer dependent on the control chips to make others bend to his will, the Controller thwarts Tony Stark's attempt to put him behind bars. This 64-page issue promises to reveal new secrets about a long time Iron Man foe and you can expect plenty of action since IM and the Controller don't really see eye-to-eye.

IRON MAN #306 (ships 31 May)

by Len Kaminski / Kev Hopgood/ Steve Mitchell

It's the finale to the Crash and Burn story arc. Iron Man learns who masterminded the smear campaign that brought Stark Enterprises to its knees. The Hulk and Force Works guest star.